

**Amendments to the Specification**

Please amend paragraph [0038] on pg. 12 as follows:

[0038] The path expressions are ordered beginning with the identified path expressions defined in the FROM clause **314**, to which are concatenated the path expressions **324** identified as candidates for a translation to an outer join from any WHERE clause **318** or any SELECT clause **306**, to which are concatenated any remaining path expressions from any WHERE clause **318** or any SELECT clause **306** which are not identified as candidates for a translation to an outer join. The FROM clause **314** ordering comprises path expression a **326**, path expression b **328**, path expression "a.rd" **330**, and path expression "a.rd.re" **332**. The ordering of the FROM clause path expressions results in the initial sequence of path expressions "a, b, a.rd, a.rd.re" to which is concatenated the path expressions from the WHERE clause **318** and SELECT clause **306** identified as a candidate for a translation to an outer join. The path expressions identified as a candidate for a translation to an outer join comprise path expressions "a.rf" **334**, "a.rf.rg" **336**, "a.rb" **338**, and "a.rb.rc" **340**. The remaining path expressions from the WHERE clause **318** and SELECT clause **306** which are not identified as candidates for a translation to an outer join comprise path expressions "b" **342**, "a.rd" **344**, and "a.rd.re" **346**. This produces the following path expression ordering **348**:

a, b, a.rd, a.rd.re, a.rf, a.rf.rg, a.rb, a.rb.rc, b[[.]], a.rd, a.rd.re